

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-19 (Cancelled).

20 (Withdrawn/Currently Amended). A method for the treatment of a disease, ~~which disease involves signalling of a cytokine through~~ in which NF- $\kappa$ B inducing kinase (NIK) and cyc interaction is involved in the pathogenesis of said disease, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an amount of a polypeptide effective to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction, ~~of wherein the~~ polypeptide comprising comprises:

(a) ~~NF- $\kappa$ B inducing kinase (NIK)~~ NIK;

(b) a variant of (a) that maintains at least 90% sequence identity with (a) and maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction;

~~(c)~~ (c) a pharmaceutically acceptable functional derivative of (a) prepared from the functional groups present on the lateral chains of the amino acid moieties or on the terminal N- or C-groups of the polypeptide of (a), that

maintains the ability of (a) to bind to cyc and

inhibit cyc/NIK interaction; or

(d) a circularly permuted derivative of (a) that  
maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and

inhibit cyc/NIK interaction; ~~or~~

~~(e) a fragment of (a), which maintains the ability  
thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK  
interaction,~~

with the proviso that the cytokine is other than IL-2.

21-24 (Canceled).

25 (Withdrawn/Currently Amended). The method  
according to claim 20, wherein the ~~mutant~~ variant of NIK is  
AlyNIK.

26-68 (Cancelled).

69 (Previously Presented). A method of treatment  
~~and/or prevention~~ of a disease in which NF- $\kappa$ B inducing kinase  
(NIK) and cyc interaction is involved in the pathogenesis of  
said disease, comprising administering to a subject in need  
thereof an amount of a polypeptide effective to bind to cyc  
and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction, ~~of~~ wherein the polypeptide  
~~comprising~~ comprises:

(a) a fragment of NIK comprising the cyc binding  
domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the

ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit  
cyc/NIK interaction;

(b) a variant of (a) that ~~maintains~~has at least 90%  
sequence identity with (a) and maintains the  
ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit  
cyc/NIK interaction;

(c) a pharmaceutically acceptable functional  
derivative of (a) prepared from the functional  
groups present on the lateral chains of the  
amino acid moieties or on the terminal N- or C-  
groups of the polypeptide of (a), that maintains  
the ability of (a) to bind to cyc and inhibit  
cyc/NIK interaction; or

(d) a circularly permuted derivative of (a) that  
maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and  
inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

70 (Currently Amended). A method of treatment  
~~and/or prevention~~ of a disease in which NF- $\kappa$ B activation is  
involved, comprising administering to a subject in need  
thereof an amount of a polypeptide effective to bind to cyc  
and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction, ~~of~~ wherein the polypeptide  
~~comprising~~comprises:

- (a) a fragment of NF- $\kappa$ B inducing kinase (NIK) corresponding to the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction;
- (b) a variant of (a) that ~~maintains~~has at least 90% sequence identity with (a) and maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction;
- (c) a pharmaceutically acceptable functional derivative of (a) prepared from the functional groups present on the lateral chains of the amino acid moieties or on the terminal N- or C- groups of the polypeptide of (a), that maintains the ability of (a) to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction; or
- (d) a circularly permuted derivative of (a) that maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

71 (Cancelled).

72 (Withdrawn/Currently Amended). ~~A~~The method according to claim 69, for the treatment of cancer.

73-74 (Canceled).

75. (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method according to claim 69, for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, asthma, cardiac infarct, Alzheimer's disease, or atherosclerosis.

76-81 (Cancelled).

82 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 69, wherein said polypeptide is a fragment of NF- $\kappa$ B inducing kinase (NIK), comprising the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction or a pharmaceutically acceptable functional derivative of said fragment, prepared from the functional groups present on the lateral chains of the amino acid moieties or on the terminal N- or C- groups of said fragment, that maintains the ability of said fragment to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

83 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 69, wherein said polypeptide is a fragment of NF- $\kappa$ B inducing kinase (NIK), comprising the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

84 (Withdrawn/Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 83, wherein said polypeptide is the C-terminus of NIK (from residue 624 to 947, SEQ ID NO:19).

85 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 83, wherein said polypeptide is NIK 640-720 (SEQ ID NO: 18).

86 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 69, wherein said variant of (b) ~~maintains~~ has at least 95% sequence identity with (a).

87 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 70, wherein said polypeptide is a fragment of NF-κB inducing kinase (NIK), comprising the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction or a pharmaceutically acceptable functional derivative of said fragment, prepared from the functional groups present on the lateral chains of the amino acid moieties or on the terminal N- or C- groups of said fragment, that maintains the ability of said fragment to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

88 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 70, wherein said polypeptide is a fragment of NF-κB inducing kinase (NIK), comprising the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

89 (Withdrawn/Currently Amended). ~~A~~-The method in accordance with claim 88, wherein said polypeptide is the C-terminus of NIK (from residue 624 to 947, SEQ ID NO:19).

90 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~The method in accordance with claim 88, wherein said polypeptide is NIK 640-720 (SEQ ID NO: 18).

91 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~The method in accordance with claim 70, wherein said variant of (b) ~~maintains~~has at least 95% sequence identity with (a).

92-99 (Cancelled).

100 (Currently Amended). ~~A~~The method in accordance with claim 98, wherein said polypeptide is NIK 640-720 (SEQ ID NO: 18).

101 (Cancelled).

102 (New). The method according to claim 69, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable functional derivative of (a) is an ester or aliphatic amide of a carboxyl group, an N-acyl derivative of a free amino group, or an O-acyl derivative of a free hydroxyl group.

103 (New). The method according to claim 69, wherein the polypeptide comprises:

(a) a fragment of NIK comprising the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction;

(b) a variant of (a) that has at least 90% sequence identity with (a) and maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction; or

(d) a circularly permuted derivative of (a) that maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.

104 (New). The method according to claim 70, wherein the pharmaceutically acceptable functional derivative of (a) is an ester or aliphatic amide of a carboxyl group, an N-acyl derivative of a free amino group, or an O-acyl derivative of a free hydroxyl group.

105 (New). The method according to claim 70, wherein the polypeptide comprises:

(a) a fragment of NIK comprising the cyc binding domain (SEQ ID NO: 18), which maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction;

(b) a variant of (a) that has at least 90% sequence identity with (a) and maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction;

(d) a circularly permuted derivative of (a) that maintains the ability thereof to bind to cyc and inhibit cyc/NIK interaction.